

Abraham Lincoln

THE CHILD

As by the fire, a knot of pine for light,
The boy from freshly finished toil lies down
To master mysteries of verb and noun,
Unmindful of the hours in hurried flight,
E'en fairyland with king and doughty knight
Who wage their mimic wars in floral crown—
As youth, awakening, shows reluctant frown—
Must give the day and loan the hours of night.
So he who sees real battles to be won
By thoughts and courage rescued from the wild
Tumultuous years of boyhood reconciled,
To share the toil of brain with boist'rous fun,
Must learn, must know, perchance must weep as one
Who bears a manly burden while a child.

THE MAN.

What time a gloom enshrouds the harried ground,
A pall engulfs our hope, and glory hides
Behind a wall of hatred that divides
The states a nation thought securely bound,
While strife and noise of war afar resound,
A man steps forth between the swinging tides
To teach the world anew that right abides
Where freedom, love, and faith in man abound.
In vain he writhed e'er Hell should swing the gate
To reap the bloody fields, to kill and maim;
In vain would he the sundered lands reclaim,
Yet spelled the riven stars his cruel fate:
To face the avalanche of war and hate
Till Death entwined the martyr's crown of fame.

THE MEMORY.

Ah such a man empyreal sphere attains,
Who knows and feels his fellow's hurts and needs,
Whose heart responds to every wound that bleeds,
And every soul entrapped by cruel pains,
With love that falls like Heaven's fresh'ning rains,
Uplifts the fallen and all the hungry feeds,
Ignoring hate of race or jangling creeds,
Or stains of iron from lately broken chains.
How strong thy love, yet meek as gentle dove!
Such perfect bloom from lowly tangled sod!
While groping mortals, striving upward, plod,
They'll reach and strain for thy enkindling love,
Triumphant love vouchsafed from realms above,
In human form, the majesty of God.

Edmond S. Meany.

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To
Major William H. Lambert
from
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